



## Office of Representative Heath Shuler

Representing North Carolina's Eleventh Congressional District

**For Immediate Release**

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### **Rep. Shuler Helps Cut Number of Uninsured Children in NC Nearly in Half** *House Sends Children's Healthcare Legislation to President*

**Washington, D.C.** – The effort to improve the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) neared completion today as U.S. Representative Heath Shuler joined with an overwhelming majority of the House of Representatives to send legislation to the President's desk. President Obama is expected to sign the bill into law shortly.

"Since I arrived in Congress I have worked with my colleagues to improve SCHIP and move closer to fulfilling our moral obligation to care for the least among us," Rep. Shuler said. "I view providing healthcare to children as a life issue, and as a pro-life member of Congress I was proud to support this legislation."

The legislation being sent to the White House is similar to legislation that twice passed the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress, but was vetoed by President Bush both times.

Today's bill, the Children's Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act, H.R. 2, reauthorizes SCHIP for four and a half years, preserving the healthcare of 7 million low-income children across the country. It will also extend coverage to over 4 million children who are currently eligible for, but not enrolled in, SCHIP or Medicaid.

In North Carolina this improvement means an additional 136,000 children will be covered. Reducing the number of uninsured North Carolina children by a full 46%. The bill also ensures that the 240,000 children currently enrolled in SCHIP will not lose their healthcare.

"Every child should have the opportunity to grow up healthy and this bill correctly rightly provides states the resources they need to reach out and cover millions of eligible children."

SCHIP was created in 1997 to provide healthcare coverage for children in families that earn too little to afford health insurance for their children themselves but too much to qualify for Medicaid. Today's SCHIP improvements are fully paid for and will not add to the national debt.

It has been endorsed by dozens of organizations, representing millions of Americans – ranging from business groups such as the National Federation of Independent Businesses and Business Roundtable to the American Hospital Association and such groups as AARP and Families USA.

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